which Professor Buck set for the Harvard library: adequate financing, a capable staff, well-selected and accessible collections, responsiveness to the needs of users, and an informed constituency. In working effectively toward these goals and in helping those both inside and outside the library to understand them Professor Buck has served Harvard well and has earned the respect of all academic librarians—*Andrew J. Eaton, Washington University.*

Technical Libraries: Users and Their Demands. By Margaret Slater. Aslib, 1964. 126p. 26s.

This report gives the chief results of a pilot study on the use made of a selected number of technical libraries located in Greater London during 1962 and 1963. The study was carried out by the Aslib research department of which Miss Slater is a staff member. Since a subsequent larger-scale study is to be undertaken the author cautions the reader that this is an interim report and that the findings are preliminary.

The three prime aims of this study are:

1. "to discover what items of information or documents customers seek, why they seek them and how they obtain them."
2. "to test a hypothesis; that it is possible to classify customers into user groups possessing recognisable common features and characteristic behaviour patterns, and to classify group needs."
3. "to measure the demand on librarians and libraries, in terms of expenditure of their time and skill, and use of stock made by different user groups."

Responses were obtained from the users of libraries of thirteen industrial firms (212 users), six academic institutions (223 users), four learned societies (79 users), and two government laboratories (75 users). Broad subject coverage was achieved as practically all types of scientific and technical backgrounds were represented in the 583 persons contributing directly to the study. The questionnaire sought to determine: (1) background information about the respondent; (2) information about the particular demand on the library service described in the questionnaire (purpose, relationship to user's normal work, degree of success, category of document used, search time taken, etc.); and (3) information about the extent of participation of librarian and user in the search.

Analysis of the data gathered was carried out by discipline, by type of employer, and by type and level of job. The results reveal nothing particularly different from those produced by previous use studies of technical libraries. Periodicals remain the chief vehicle for the transfer of scientific and technical information. Most data sought is directly related to the immediate work of the individual involved. Needed data first is sought in personal files, by questioning colleagues, or in handbooks, before the search is carried to the library. Many users do not use the services and skills of the librarian efficiently. The scientist relies less on the librarian for help than does his engineer counterpart. Most users seldom go beyond their own library in the search. Eighty-three per cent report success in their searches and, in general, the user feels that the library service rendered is excellent. An accessible location is a tremendous incentive to frequent library use.

These are some of the findings. None are really new or startling. Little real evidence is offered to support the hypothesis that customers of technical libraries can be classified into meaningful user groups. Nevertheless, administrators of technical libraries will find this to be an interesting and, perhaps, useful report. It brings together in one cover information on the habits of the users of several kinds of technical libraries. While it may not provide sufficient evidence for the general application of its finding to a particular technical library it does by raising many questions provide library administrators with a checklist of pertinent points which should be considered for efficient and flexible service. It is hoped that the projected larger study will provide more answers to many of the questions raised in this pilot report.—*E. G. Roberts, Georgia Tech.*

Libraries and Automation. Proceedings of the Conference on Libraries and Automation Held at Airlie Foundation, Warrenton, Virginia, May 26-30, 1963.

The Airlie Conference on Libraries and Automation was held in the summer of 1963 under the sponsorship of the Library of Congress, the National Science Foundation, and the Council on Library Resources.